

RESEARCH SCHOLAR,
BANDIPUR TIGER RESERVE,
MYSORE, INDIA,
July 7, 1978.

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3. RANGE EXTENSION OF CRABEATING MONGOOSE IN BANGLADESH

Recently (May 1978) three of our postgraduate students of wildlife biology, a wildlife enthusiast and myself were at Bariadhala, near the coast of Bay of Bengal, in Ramgarh-Sitakundu Range of the Chittagong Forest Division in the south-eastern part of Bangladesh. We were looking for wild animals along the edges of a moist deciduous forest dominated by *Artocarpus chaplasha*, *Dipterocarpus turbinatus* etc., where the edges had an abundance of *Grewia*, *Sterculia*, *Wrightia*, *Cycas* etc. There was a pond (100 m by 30 m), covered almost entirely by Indian Lotus. On its southern bank there was a thicket (5 m by 30 m) having some plants of the neighbouring forest with an abundance of *Clerodendrum*. A bridle-path-cum-cattle trail separated the pond from the forest edge.

One of the students (Anwarul Islam) who was searching for a wounded bird which he shot found a mongoose-like animal closely watching from inside the thicket. We encircled the bush and tried to drive the animal out. After about half an hour of beating the jungle the animal came to the open area, between the bush and the pond and again entered the jungle. By that time I took two shots by my

Fujica ST701 35mm Camera with a 85-205 mm tele-zoom lens. Unfortunately the sky was overcast and the pictures are not sharp but they clearly show the distinguishing features of a Crabeating Mongoose *Herpestes urva* (Hodgson). The white patch running from the mouth to the shoulder on either side, its massive build and erectile body and tail hairs are quite conspicuous. The latter feature must have been a defensive posture or threat display.

Two species of Mongoose are known to occur in Bangladesh. They are the Common Mongoose *Herpestes edwardsi* (Geoffroy) and Small Indian Mongoose *H. auropunctatus* (Hodgson), both are common. But there appears to be no record of the Crabeating Mongoose occurring in this part of the sub-continent or of West Bengal. Blanford (1888), Pocock (1939-1941), Ellerman and Morrison-Scott (1951), have not included Bangladesh (or Bengal) that is erstwhile East Pakistan in the distributional range of the Crabeating Mongoose. Authors like Mountfort (1968) and Husain (1971) who have worked the Bangladesh fauna also did not include this species in their record. Prater (1971) states that it oc-

curs from Nepal to Assam, eastwards to Burma, south China and the northern part of Malaya. Therefore this is first record of the occurrence of *Herpestes urva* in Bangladesh. The distributional range of this species can now be extended from the neighbouring Assam and Burma to almost the coast of the Bay of Bengal across Chittagong.

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4. AN INTERESTING BEHAVIOUR OF THREE NILGIRI TAHR (*HEMITRAGUS HYLOCRIUS* OGILBY 1833) KIDS

On 3rd March 1978 I accompanied Mr. John Joseph, Wild Life Warden, Mudumalai Wild Life Sanctuary and Mr. Radcliffe, Nilgiri Wild Life Association, to the Nilgiri Tahr country. Our intention was to look for poachers. The previous day, Mr. John Joseph had sent a reconnaissance party and our plan was to meet them beyond Bangitappal in the interior of the Tahr Country. After our rendezvous with the advance party we went to Nadgani to see the precipitous slope leading into the Nilambur valley of Kerala from where poachers, using a long cane as a rope, frequently came to steal cane and to shoot.

On the way to Nadgani we saw 13 adult

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Tahr on a slope. Nearly a kilometre after the sighting, 3 Tahr kids with 4-5 cm long horns, probably separated from the parental herd, seeing us walking in a single file, ran towards us. Seeing them coming towards us we stood still on the bridle path and one of the three kids came as close as 6 metres to our Khaki clad troop. However after some time we started walking and the tahr instead of running away, occasionally bleated and followed us. Many a time the wind blew our scent to the kids and that also did not frighten them. The young which came close to us first mostly maintained a distance of 8-10 metres and followed us for well over a kilometre.

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